



The Old Ironsides Report



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82nd Airborne Division legal staff helps soldiers gain citizenship

Story by Sgt. Brent M. Williams, 49th Public Affairs Detachment
BAGHDAD, Iraq—On the right shoulder of U.S. Army soldiers serving overseas, in Iraq, Afghanistan and abroad, there is a patch, a blue field, in which fifty stars lie, offset with seven red stripes and six white, the Colors of the United States of America, honorably trimmed in gold.

Yet, according to Capt. Patrick Murphy, regimental judge advocate for the 82nd Airborne Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team, there remain approximately 37,400 soldiers in the U.S. Army who are not citizens of the country they have sworn to defend during times of war and peace. More than 3,000 of those soldiers are currently deployed to Iraq, he said.

The 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment's Staff Judge Advocate is working to help soldiers obtain their citizenship.

Murphy and his Brigade Operational Legal Team is working with the U.S. Immigration Naturalization Service help non-citizen brigade soldiers acquire U.S. citizenship.

There are 25 brigade paratroopers working toward that goal, he said.

President George W. Bush signed Executive Order 13269 in July expediting the naturalization process for soldiers deployed in support of America's War on Terrorism, said Murphy.

"It's a tool to help out paratroopers trying to acquire citizenship," Murphy explained, "It waives the three year requirement for non-citizens, who normally have to serve on active duty for at least three years before they can apply for citizenship."

The idea initially started in Afghanistan, where division judge advocates worked to speed up the naturalization process for soldiers deployed in a combat environment, said Staff Sgt. Troy D. Robinson, SJA, 2nd BCT.

"We're working through the battalions and the legal teams from the 1st Armored Division out of Germany to expedite the process for soldiers, reducing waiting period, possibly waiving fees," Robinson said.

The staff is currently working to recruit an INS judge to interview the applicants and upon approving their citizenship, conduct the oath of allegiance for the soldiers, said Robinson.

Murphy, who taught constitutional military law at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, is working with a fellow graduate, a prominent immigration law attorney in the States, to get an INS judge to come to Baghdad.

Murphy and his team are working to accomplish this task in the next 90 days, added Robinson.

Sgt. Jose E. Salinas, cannon crewmember, Battery B, 2nd Bn., 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, was born in Montamores, Mexico, and has lived in the United States for more than 16 years, and sees citizenship as something that must be done.

"It's something I want to get done, because my kids are U.S. citizens," Salinas said, "and I am the only one in the family who is a resident and not a citizen. I'm doing what my country needs me to do. I'm doing what other Americans are not doing or have not volunteered to do for their country."

For other soldiers, citizenship is a must to advance in their



Spc. David McHenry, 1139th MP Co., fingerprints Sgt. Ricardo Martinez, HHC, 3rd Bn., 325th Airborne Infantry. Soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division are applying for citizenship while serving in Baghdad deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Army careers. A soldier must be a U.S. citizen to attend Ranger school or join Special Forces.

The brigade legal staff has been working since June to help the paratroopers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team complete all the steps required to complete the naturalization process, said Spc. Juan M. Arevalo, legal specialist, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2BCT.

"We floated the ideal to the battalions," Arevalo said, "and I tell you the response was overwhelming."

Arevalo and staff acquired the applications and conducted briefings for the 25 residents seeking citizenship. The brigade judge advocate also examined every application to ensure that there were no mistakes in order to expedite the process.

The legal team working with the assistance of an Army National Guard unit out of Missouri, the 1139th Military Police Company is currently fingerprinting the applicants, the second step necessary for the INS.

It will take approximately three weeks to gather the identification cards, fingerprints and photos for the INS applications, said Arevalo.

"They are over here for their country," Arevalo, a fifth-generation Mexican-American. "They are over here fighting a war, and it's not even technically their country."

Not every paratrooper seeking citizenship will become citizens during their time here because of time constraints, said Murphy.

"We have non-citizens who are making the ultimate sacrifices for the nation," Murphy explained. "What more can you ask of these Americans?"

The staff judge advocates working throughout Baghdad and Iraq have helped more than 200 U.S. soldiers acquire citizenship while serving in Iraq and will make every effort to continue, said Murphy.

NEWS

Bush, Putin Urge 2 Nations Against Nukes

CAMP DAVID, Md. (AP) - President Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin called on Iran and North Korea to abandon their suspected nuclear weapons ambitions and pledged Saturday to work together on Iraq's reconstruction despite differences over the U.S.-led war. The leaders, standing by each other at a news conference after two days of talks, declared themselves allies in the fight against terrorism. "No cause justifies terror," Bush said.

North Korea Calls Rumsfeld 'Psychopath'

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) - North Korea called U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld a "psychopath" and a "stupid man" on Saturday, denouncing him for predicting that the country's isolated communist regime will one day fall. Speaking before a group of U.S. and South Korean businessmen, Rumsfeld said last week that freedom will eventually come and "light up that oppressed land with hope and with promise," casting aside the dictatorship that has ruled the North for more than half a century.

Embattled Do-Not-Call List Placed on Hold

WASHINGTON (AP) - The operators of the national do-not-call registry have a message for the millions of people who signed up to be free of telemarketers: If you thought the phone was going to stop ringing, think again. After a bewildering week of court reversals and breakneck congressional action, the Federal Trade Commission is acknowledging that its anti-telemarketing service has, at least for now, been placed on hold.

Chaplain's Thought for the Day: **Dartboard Or Pipeline?**

To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily. --Colossians 1:29
"Don't let life happen to you. Let life happen through you."

We often tended to see life as something coming at us. We feel like a worn-out dartboard. We use all our energy to shield ourselves from the darts of life's trials. What we need to do is "Let life happen through us," this is a different approach. Instead of dodging life's fiery darts, we are to let God's life and love be channeled through us, blessing us on its way to blessing others. Instead of being life's dartboard, we need to choose to become God's pipeline. Then we can begin living more effectively for Him.

In his letter to the Colossians, Paul mentioned the many troubles he was facing. Yet he was determined to be a channel of blessing by allowing God to work through him.

What about you? Are you a dartboard or a pipeline? It's a God-given challenge and choice.

God blesses you to bless others.

On the other hand...

Deployed soldier marries Italian bride... In Montana

KALISPELL, Mont. (AP) -- An American soldier stationed in Iraq married his Italian fiancée in a Montana double proxy ceremony that neither attended.

Instead, Pfc. David Gaynor's parents exchanged vows and rings Friday for the absent couple - and sealed their son's marriage with a kiss.

Gaynor's uncle and teenage sister stood in as best man and maid of honor for Gaynor, 21, and bride Ilaria Caon, 19. A justice of the peace presided.

"As I was looking into my wife's eyes, I saw her as a young bride and I felt very touched and excited," Philip Gaynor said after the ceremony.

Rebecca Gaynor's voice was charged with emotion as she said: "As a proxy for Ilaria, I do take David ..."

A military portrait of the groom rested on a table.

After enlisting in 2001, David Gaynor went with the 173rd Airborne Regiment to a base north of Venice in Vicenza, Italy, where he met Ilaria, the daughter of an Italian policeman.

They made plans to marry and eventually live in Montana. The couple expects a child in November.

Both families were looking forward to the couple's wedding when the war began and David's unit got overnight orders to parachute into Kirkuk, Iraq, in March.

Attempts to arrange a single-proxy marriage in Italy failed, but Philip Gaynor learned that Montana was the one state in the country that allowed stand-ins for both bride and groom.

When the paperwork was finally completed Wednesday, the ceremony was scheduled for Friday morning.

The proxy newlyweds left in a stretch limousine to share a wedding cake with friends and co-workers at a small reception.

At the reception, a phone call conveyed the news to Ilaria, who cut into a cake to celebrate with her family in Italy.

In Iraq, David said he expected to get thrown in a mud puddle and to fight his way out as part of an Army tradition.

Deck of cards, a la francaise, makes Rumsfeld ace of spades

PARIS (AP) — The ace of spades? Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld gets the honor in a new French deck of cards. President Bush is the king of diamonds and Osama bin Laden the joker.

The game takes a jab at the famous deck of cards created for U.S. soldiers hunting down ousted Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein and other leaders from the deposed regime.

"I found it completely indecent to present a manhunt as a game," said Thierry Meyssan, the man behind the French deck. "We thought this card game would allow us to ... explain why we consider the government of George Bush a threat to international security."

Meyssan is the author of a one-time French best seller, 9-11: The Big Lie, claiming that no plane ever crashed into the Pentagon on Sept. 11, and that the attacks were plotted by a faction within the U.S. military.

Now, Meyssan said in a telephone interview, he wants to expose "the 52 most dangerous American officials."

A little over 2,500 decks a la francaise have been sold, at \$9.20 each, on the Internet in recent weeks, Meyssan said. There are plans to sell the decks in stores soon and translate them into 10 languages, he said.

Each card carries a photo of the official and a text explaining the choice. Bush, as the king of diamonds, is described as "the president of a baseball club."

